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## RACE APPRECIATION AND DEMOCRACY

*By Philip Ainsworth Means*

### I. DEFINITION AND CONTENT OF RACE APPRECIATION

After the war the world will find itself faced with a multitude of problems, some of which will be economic, some of which will be political and some of which will be religious. But the vast majority of the problems will be racial and cultural, not only purely so, but also by implication and by association. That is, so many economic, so many political and so many religious problems are, in part at least, racial and cultural that that category of problems will, in its widest sense, attain tremendous extent. It therefore behooves sociologists, politicians, psychologists, geographers, anthropologists and the rulers of various lands to begin now to gather the theoretical and practical knowledge which they will so sorely need directly the war is terminated. They must learn what material and intellectual characteristics of the various races and cultures of the world are potentially capable of being woven into the fabric of future world-civilization.

This is precisely the knowledge which race appreciation seeks to impart, for the best definition of race appreciation may be given in these words. Race appreciation endeavours first to determine the cultural characteristics of each racial group present in a given state and then strives to blend the best in each cultural category with the best in every other so that society will take on a character at once synthetic and eclectic. Only in this way can a nation comprising diverse racial and cultural elements build up for itself a social structure which will be fair to all and sympathetic to all. Only thus can democracy be made real in those countries which aspire to democracy, and only thus can the greater world-democracy of the future hope

to realize its declared ambition of giving a "square deal" to all men.

Race appreciation draws its materials from an enormously variegated list of sources. Perhaps the prime ones are anthropology and history, but psychology, sociology, political economy, commercial economy, geography and other branches of science all contribute their quota.

## II. RACE APPRECIATION IN THE PAST

Until very recent years race appreciation has been mostly unconscious, or at least unformulated. Nevertheless it has been a very vigorous factor in the growth of civilizations. From the very earliest days of human or semi-human existence man has invented things to meet his needs in his unceasing combat with his environment, and, if the invention was found good, it was speedily copied or improved upon by men other than its inventor. This process has continued, with ever increasing complexity, throughout the history of mankind, and to it is due the highly synthetic character of most great civilizations, notably of our own West European civilization and of Chinese civilization. The growth of civilizations, then, may truthfully be said to have been caused by an unconscious race appreciation. That is, various societies have discovered from time to time, or have had it forcibly brought to their attention, that other societies possess admirable material and social institutions which well merit emulation. Thus the best in outside cultures has been made a part of societies alien to them, and the latter have, thereby, gained in excellence and strength by means of a process of race appreciation. One has but to dip back a little into the history of Egypt or of Rome or of Scandinavia to see how the process works. Indeed, an analytical examination of modern West European civilization as a whole reveals the process mentioned developed far toward its logical conclusion.

The process of unconscious race appreciation, however, has been by no means universal in its operation. As millenia and centuries have rolled by some societies have

shown greater aptitude for it than have others. Sometimes this disparity may be accounted for by geographical considerations. In ancient America, for example, complete isolation from all contactual influences derived from other cultures and societies brought about a curious semi-stagnation after a certain point had been reached. Again, other peoples, such as the early Australians and the Andamanese, seem to have made no progress at all, doubtless on account of the fact that their country offered few inducements to outsiders of high culture to come thither. Then too, one can find a number of cases where race appreciation of the unconscious variety has operated up to a certain point and then, for one reason or another, suddenly ceased. Examples of this type of society may be found in the Philippines (where Chinese influence was able to advance native culture up to a certain point), in the Canary Islands (where there are traces of North African influences), and in Rhodesia (where it is clear the Arabian or other traders were important in this way).

Owing to this irregularity in the aptitude or opportunities for race appreciation among different peoples there has come into being with the passage of time a wide divergency between the cultural advancement of various peoples and races. As some have, for a variety of reasons, less actively participated in the unconscious process of race appreciation than others, so have they now less developed cultures and less developed mental powers. The mentality of the West Europeans or of the Chinese and Japanese as contrasted with that of the Bushmen or of the Arawaks of central Brazil shows exactly the degree of disparity which has thus been created.

So much, then, for the entirely unconscious race appreciation of the past. In more recent times, especially since the beginning of the period of explorations by Europeans in the fifteenth century, race appreciation has been gaining in practical and political importance for the reason that West European culture (elaborated by the processes already outlined) has been brought into intimate contact with less elaborated cultures or with civilizations which, being very

different in their elaboration, have seemed to the Europeans to be inferior to their own because they were different. In some cases, as, for example, in Hispanic America, various societies of by no means despicable native attainments have, as it were, been knocked on the head and forced into a cultural straight-jacket, to the great detriment not only of themselves but also of those who did the knocking and the forcing. Again, other high cultures have had other fates in connection with their relations to West European civilization.

### III. RACE APPRECIATION IN THE WORLD OF TODAY

This brings us to a point whence we can survey the present status of race appreciation. As I said before, race appreciation has been mostly unconscious or at least unformulated in the past. I have sketched the significance of entirely unconscious race appreciation, and I now purpose to outline the unformulated variety of it.

In my opinion, the British and the French have been the best exponents of unformulated race appreciation. In their colonizing activities they have usually displayed a lively appreciation of the good qualities of the natives of their colonies. The British in India, in Burma, in Egypt, in Sarawak, in the Pacific Island possessions and elsewhere have consistently manifested a desire to mould the political and social institutions created by themselves upon models furnished by the native institutions of the country. The use of headmen in Burma and the whole fabric of Indian colonial government are eloquent of this. The French, in Morocco, in Annam, in Madagascar, have done likewise. As a result, the English and the French are the best colonizers in the world. One can, of course, only conjecture what would have been the course of events in Mexico and in South America had the British or the French, and not the Spanish, conquered those regions. But the indications are that the native institutions would have been preserved and would have been adapted to modern needs, just as analogous ones in regions already mentioned

have been. British failure to do anything of this sort in North America is explained by the fact the native culture there was too lowly to command respect, the population being scanty into the bargain. The French in Canada did what they could along these lines among the more highly developed Iroquois.

The United States, in the Hawaiian Islands and Philippines, has likewise shown a desire to follow out the unformulated principles of race appreciation. Perhaps the worst colonists have been the Dutch and the Spanish. The latter, especially, used native institutions, when they used them at all, only as a means of oppression.

The perfectly natural outcome of the situation outlined here is that in the British and French colonies the population is wholesome, sturdy and contented; it is likewise loyal to its European instructors and is aiding them magnificently in this war. On the other hand, in Mexico, in the Andean countries and in other lands formerly under the rule of Spain, the bulk of the population is in a state which is profoundly deplorable on account of the fact that its native good qualities have long been ignored and neglected, being supplanted by alien and unsuitable institutions arbitrarily erected over a mixed population of which only a very slight proportion is fitted to receive and use such institutions.

#### IV. RACE APPRECIATION MUST BE CONSCIOUSLY APPLIED

Everything bearing on such matters in contemporary life indicates that race appreciation must be consciously applied to the needs of world civilization. Just as many lands will always have a population made up of a number of ethnic elements, so also will the world. And just as the civilization of each of those lands will, to be fair and salutary, have to comprise institutions derived from those of each racial element, so will the future world civilization be built up of many stones brought from many and widely separated quarries.

To go from the lesser to the greater, I will first discuss the importance of race appreciation in national affairs, then I will take up the matter of its application to world affairs.

Lands which have a population consisting of two or more distinct races and their blends fall into two groups. The larger is that in which the races involved are the native race with its culture and the West European race with its culture. (Morocco, Annam, Burma, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Peru and Egypt are all examples of this group.) The smaller group is that represented by the United States where the small and humbly cultured native population has been well nigh exterminated and where it has been replaced by two or more intrusive elements (the West Europeans and the Negroes and the Orientals). The race problem here concerns races all of which are alien to the soil, and only one of which is capable of sounding the correct cultural note. The problem here is that of making the others approximate as closely as possible to the culture of the West Europeans. There is here no question of preserving native institutions for the benefit of natives, for the institutions are unimportant, and the natives (i.e., Indians) are very rapidly merging themselves, both by blood and culturally, with the West European element.

In Mexico and the Andean countries, on the other hand, a good native stock, with great potentialities still, has long been crushed down and dwarfed by a total lack of race appreciation on the part of the ruling class. The political institutions of those countries have always been manufactured in Europe ever since the Spanish conquest. No account of the native characteristics of the people for whom they were designed has been taken, nor has any effort ever been made to discover what possibilities of a governmental nature might be latent in the native institutions of the country. Once a course of systematic and intelligently conducted race appreciation is instituted in those countries, we may expect to see a general and rapid improvement in the very nature and temper of those nations. From the point of view of the Mexican govern-

ment and of the Andean governments such a course is urgently necessary. After the war the other countries of the world, especially those which like England, France, Japan, Argentina, and China have no or few race problems, will make tremendous strides in material and intellectual development. Unless countries which have complex populations (and here I refer especially to lands like Mexico and the Andean countries) wish to be left hopelessly behind the times, they simply must bring their populations up to modern standards. It can be done, and it must be done. But the beginning must be made now. And race appreciation is the only road to the goal.

Luckily one government at least (that of Mexico) realizes this. Under the direction of Dr. Manuel Gamio the Mexican department of the interior is laying the foundations of a profound and very necessary study of the social characteristics of the various native groups in the country. That study will teach the government exactly what sort of institutions is needed by the various groups to bring them to the highest possible development and bring to an end the prevailing chaos. In the Andes the movement is not as yet so definitely formulated, but even there a few men and women are studying the problem of race appreciation.

The importance of race appreciation in the world as a whole can hardly be overemphasized. World civilization is, as I have said, bound to be synthetic and eclectic. To be successfully so it must intensify the present somewhat lazy tendency toward borrowing and copying the neighbours' good things into a vigorous but unhasty campaign which shall aim to make all peoples understand all others and to make all governments consciously seek for institutions in other lands which might, perchance, better fill their needs than their own analogous institutions. A feeling of good-fellowship and of wise tolerance between peoples must be encouraged. The beginnings of all this are already plainly visible. Every issue of every daily newspaper has at least one indication of it. The other day one read that the Siamese had sent five hundred aviators to fight in France. Today one is told that the Japanese are preparing to aid the Czecho-Slovaks to break down the



Bolshevik rule. A while ago a company of American Indians were decorated for gallantry by a French general. The princes of India are preparing to establish representative government in their country with the aid of the British authorities. All these items, and countless others, attest the truth of what I say. But the process must be carried further. It is conceivable, for example, that West European art (and of course American, Australian and so on) might be galvanized into new life if, instead of either drawing its inspiration from the long since worked out arts of Greece and Rome or of trying to be weird, freakish and original (like the Cubists and their ilk), it should begin to study the marvelous sculptures of Angkor, of Boro-budur, of Palenque and of the Tigris-Euphrates civilizations. European religion could gain new spiritual beauties by studying those of Buddhism and Confucianism. Administrators would be able to gain much valuable knowledge from the social systems of ancient India, China, Mexico and Peru. Agriculturists would gain many hints from some of the inhabitants of the Philippines and from the Quechuas of the Andes and from the Chinese rice-growers. So it goes. Each race and each culture contains at least some good which could be made to serve as a thread to be woven into the fabric of future civilization. Perhaps West European culture, on account of its mechanical and practical superiority will furnish the greatest number of threads, but even West European civilization has its lacks, most of them political and intellectual or spiritual, and these can only be compensated for and obliterated by race appreciation and thoughtful adaptations from other civilizations.

#### V. WORLD DEMOCRACY AND RACE APPRECIATION

Many people in these days, when told, as they constantly are, that democracy is the only form of government worth having, swallow the statement whole, accepting it on its own valuation, and immediately demand democracy and more democracy. They do not pause to think what they mean by democracy, nor do they really know what

they mean by it. Still less are they aware of the inherent weaknesses and fallibilities latent in democracy. Nevertheless, after some generations of experiment and of race-improvement, it will probably transpire that *some* sort of democracy is the best sort of government for peoples of West European blood, and perhaps also for some non West European peoples. Meanwhile, there are many peoples who are totally unfitted for democracy, who do not want it, and who would (and do) abuse it if it is forced on them. The Russians, the Chinese, the peoples of India and those of Mexico are all cases in point. Each of these peoples has or will have its own institutions, suitable to it because created by it. Those institutions may not themselves be democratic institutions, yet surely it would be undemocratic for the rest of the world to destroy them. The foundations of real democracy are tolerance and fair dealing. There is no democracy in taking away from a people that which is its own and which it wants, forcing it to have instead something which it regards with dislike. Yet that is precisely what some would like to see happen in Russia and in China.

World democracy will only be achieved when all sorts of peoples, all sorts of cultures and all sorts of societies dwell together in gracious good-fellowship and in a spirit of generosity. When we learn not to condemn all those who are different from ourselves in various respects, we shall begin to approach the democratic ideal.